

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

October 18, 2012

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As Winter Approaches, MoDOT Prepares With Statewide Drill

by Holly Dentner

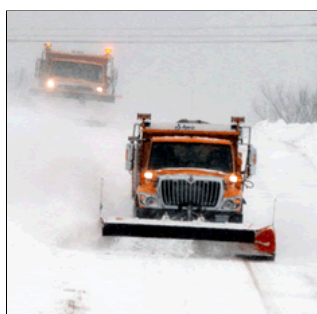
The leaves fall, the temperatures drop, and before you know it, winter has settled across Missouri. This year, MoDOT will put its snow fight preparations to the test with a statewide winter operations drill on Oct. 31.

"The way MoDOT deals with snow is a year-round topic of conversation for us, and we're always looking for ways to improve our performance," said State Maintenance Engineer Beth Wright. "This year, we're trying something new that will allow us to test the readiness of employees and equipment."

During the statewide winter operations drill, MoDOT will activate its emergency operations centers and trucks with snowplows and spreaders will deploy across state routes in response to a simulated snowfall event.

"We have a detailed plan and our trucks drive set routes that allow us to work efficiently and make the most of our resources," said Wright. "This exercise gives us a chance to measure that snowplow circuit and better anticipate response times when it really does snow."

Motorists may notice increased numbers of MoDOT vehicles on state routes during the drill. In rural areas, crews will deploy after 8 a.m. In urban areas, the drill will not begin until after 9 a.m. Wright estimates that the exercise will take approximately six hours.



The drill isn't the only element to MoDOT's winter weather operations. All maintenance employees are completing an annual winter skills training that serves as a refresher course for plowing snow. The training assures that proper equipment operation, plowing techniques and safety measures are fresh on employees' minds as winter approaches.

"Our ultimate goal is to attack that first storm like we've been plowing snow all year," said Wright. "With careful planning and preparation, our crews will mobilize, equipment will be ready, and we can stay with it until all roads have been plowed."

MoDOT annually spends about \$42 million to keep roads clear in the winter and help ensure motorists get to their destinations safely and quickly. For information on road conditions across the state, safe traveling tips, and other winter weather information, visit www.modot.org.

More Details on Proposed Medical Insurance Benefits

The Employee Advisory Council is working with the special committee to review the proposed changes to medical insurance benefits beginning January 2015. The changes are being proposed by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission as a measure to continue to provide excellent affordable medical insurance benefits to MoDOT's active and retired employees. These changes would not cure the funding shortfalls we are facing, but would be a step to reduce spending with minimal impact to employees and retirees, while essentially retaining the same medical coverage options.

The EAC has received many comments, questions and suggestions, and there is still time to have your opinion heard. The deadline is October 21. To submit comments, contact Brenda Wells, MoDOT active employee (CO Motor Carriers) brenda.wells@modot.mo.gov, or use the EAC concern form on the intranet - <http://www.intranet/eac/>. All submissions will remain anonymous.

Additionally, 140 employees randomly selected in various divisions, districts, job titles and salary grades across the state are participating in face to face surveys. These targeted surveys will provide additional input from employees.

Two documents have been prepared and placed on the EAC's intranet page to help employees understand the proposed changes:

Frequently Asked Questions - Questions received by the EAC regarding the proposed change have been answered in an easy to understand FAQ format. A summary of the proposal is included.

Premium Rate Comparison Chart - A sample chart showing two scenarios (15 and 25 years of service) comparing current and proposed premium costs; and current costs compared to the Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan,

The EAC asks that you please take a moment to review this information and share your comments. When all comments have been received, the EAC will summarize the feedback and share with the Highways and Transportation Commission for consideration.

Missouri Operations Summit Held in St. Louis

by Kelly Martin



During the summit, MoDOT's Jeanne Olubogun, St. Louis District Traffic Engineer, helped moderate the sessions.

This year's Operations Summit brought together transportation partners from around the state to discuss highway operations and best practices for improving traffic safety and mobility in Missouri.

MoDOT personnel, local public agencies, planning agencies, law enforcement, emergency medical services, trucking and freight industry and the towing community came together to solidify the importance of good partnering in a reliable transportation system.

"This year's turnout was excellent, and included a wide variety of operations and safety professionals," said Eileen Rackers, State Traffic and Highway Safety Engineer. "With both MoDOT and external partners working together, we can look at changing the way we plan projects with a focus on improving the management and operations of the highway system."

With an emphasis on funding, incident management, communication and coordination, this summit helps to

build stronger relationships with highway agencies. These efforts help all involved to understand how we need to be aware of each other's role and responsibilities no matter what the incident or project.

The summit served as a good reminder that it is possible to identify lower-cost projects that focus on improving the traffic flow on existing roadways. The days of large highway expansion projects are gone, and we must look for smaller, more budget friendly ways to address congestion and other transportation needs. Smaller projects help to better manage the available facilities, while maximizing investments.

TransComm 2012 – Preparing for the Zombie Apocalypse

by Melissa Black



Wonder why Zombies, Zombie Apocalypse, and Zombie Preparedness live or walk dead on a government web site? As it turns out, what first began as a tongue in cheek campaign by the Centers for Disease Control to engage new audiences with preparedness messages has proven to be a very effective platform. Essentially, if you are generally well equipped to deal with a zombie apocalypse, you will be prepared for a hurricane, pandemic, earthquake, terrorist attack, blizzard or any other emergency. So, make a plan, and be prepared!

Approximately 100 transportation communication professionals from 30 states and Canada met Sept. 30 – Oct. 3 in Raleigh, N.C., at TransComm 2012 to further transportation education across the country. The TransComm Annual Conference is the annual meeting of the American Association of State

Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Subcommittee on Transportation Communication and an opportunity for transportation communicators from around the United States to build relationships that benefit their state DOTs, highlight successes, share ideas and learn from each other.

Two MoDOT customer relations staffers, Customer Relations Managers Matt Hiebert and Melissa Black, had the opportunity to attend the conference and learn about a broad variety of topics including how to get the word out on preparing for all types of emergencies – including a zombie apocalypse.

"Although we represent different states and situations, we all tackle some of the same internal and external communication issues – whether they involve highway safety, employees, public involvement, projects or others," said MoDOT Customer Relations Director Mara Campbell. "By sharing our successes and experiences, we can learn and grow from each other and all our states benefit with more effective techniques and messages."

The conference included a variety of timely and informative breakout sessions including:

- Getting More People to Hear Your Message Via Twitter
- How to Improve Communications Inside Your DOT
- Preparing for the Zombie Apocalypse: Make Your Message Matter
- Using Video to Tell Your Story Without Breaking the Bank

All representatives also participated in a best practice session sharing successful project and program ideas, and interacted with other professionals in various areas of interest including crisis management, putting safety first, a media panel Q & A with reporters, and working together with NTSB on incident management.

Attendees also had the honor to hear speakers like Paul Trombino, Iowa DOT director and chair of AASHTO's Subcommittee on Transportation Communication, as well as Gene Conti, the NC Secretary of Transportation.

Since 1996, the meeting has brought together public relations professionals from the 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia departments of transportation, along with our consultant partners, representatives of the U.S. DOT and others interested in communicating transportation topics.

What's Happening



September Safety Jackpot Winner

The September Safety Jackpot grab bag winner was Equipment Technician Supervisor Kevin Shannon of the Kansas City District. Shannon won \$875 in the grab!

[Watch Video](#)

Left to Right: Assistant District Engineer Chris Redline, Equipment Technician Supervisor Kevin Shannon and District Engineer Dan Niec. Photo: Kerri Lewis

Additional Classes Opened for SharePoint

Because of the demand for Basic User SharePoint Training, three additional online classes have been added for the remainder of 2012. If you are interested in learning the basic fundamentals of SharePoint, please register for one of these additional classes. Visit the [LMS training resource center](#) (Course Code: 25198).

For additional questions, contact:
Anita Buddemeyer
Intermediate IS Technologist
Information Systems/Collaboration
(573) 526-7931

September Retirements

Nickie Abplanalp - NW – 19 yrs
Donald Murphy - NW – 27 yrs
Allan Markt - NW – 35 yrs
Carl Evans - NW – 18 yrs
Vickie Ray - NE – 27 yrs
David Berry - NE – 35 yrs
Robert Allen - NE – 22 yrs
Steven Mundle - NE – 36 yrs
Jerry Chase - KC – 19 yrs

Beverly Chrisco - KC – 24 yrs
Peggy Higgins - CD – 20 yrs
Judith Scott - CD – 27 yrs
Donald Good - CD – 13 yrs
Kenneth Luhmann - SL – 31 yrs
Timothy Williams - SW – 28 yrs
Steven Burchell - SW – 30 yrs
Robert Smith - SE – 19 yrs

Gary Brewer - SE – 18 yrs
Philip Morgan - CO – 22 yrs
Randall Dawdy - CO – 28 yrs
Shi-ning Wen - CO – 18 yrs
Cynthia Kever - CO – 34 yrs
Daniel Schaefer - CO – 43 yrs
Glenda Robinett - CO – 45 yrs
Lenard Dedrick - CO – 30 yrs

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Customer Relations - MoDOT
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Editor: Tammy Wallace

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Checking in with MoDOT's Transportation Management System

by Holly Dentner



Newly revamped transportation management system offers users new tools and resources. TMS is located on the intranet at <http://tmshome/TMS/TMS.html>

MoDOT's transportation management system, better known as TMS, serves as the department's data warehouse for Missouri's state roadways. It is an information monster that directly reaches every MoDOT division, around 2,000 MoDOT employees, other federal and state agencies, and countless members of the public.

As MoDOT employees, many of us use TMS regularly – from updating the Traveler Information Map to entering bridge condition ratings or pulling crash data for a particular location. But TMS changes constantly, and keeping on top of what TMS can do and how it changes can be a challenge. Here's a quick overview of just a few of the newest and neatest tools available on the TMS Homepage.

Scrolling Banner – The TMS Help Desk crew can now add a scrolling banner at any time to the TMS home

page, notifying users of upcoming system updates or new items of interest. Most recently, the banner was activated to let users know that new traffic volume maps were available on the web.

Traffic Volume Maps – MoDOT publishes a new traffic volume map every year, showing how many vehicles travel on Missouri roadways. Data from 2011 has been entered into TMS and the newest traffic volume maps were posted to the web several weeks ago.

Resources – An exhaustive collection of TMS training manuals have been collected under the "Resources" tab on the TMS home page. If you need a step-by-step guide to a TMS application or a list of table definitions, this is the place to go. The link will take you to a SharePoint site full of information.

News – From the TMS homepage, click on the "News" tab to read about what updates and changes have occurred each month.

Reports – There is a wide selection of reports available from the TMS menu, broken out by business area. Based on user needs, hundreds of reports have been added to the menu since TMS was implemented back in 1998.

TMS Maps – From the TMS home page, the TMS Maps link will take you to a mapping tool that visually displays a wide variety of TMS data. The mapping tool was recently enhanced to include new search features, such as the ability to search by address, by route, by mile marker, or by intersection.

MSHP Location Book/Mapping Tool – The Missouri State Highway Patrol and other law enforcement groups around the state log into TMS to generate data needed for completing their crash reports. Officers can use the location book or the new MSHP Mapping Tool to precisely pinpoint incidents and crashes for their records.



Senior Planning Technician Pam Richter (seated) and Senior Transportation Planner Jeannemarie Lebeau are members of the TMS Help Desk, ready to answer your questions about MoDOT's Transportation Management System. TMS Support staff not pictured include Yvonne Wilbers, Darrell Knierim and Myrna Tucker. Photo by Cathy Morrison

What's Happening at Central Office



Disability Awareness & Etiquette Workshop

A Disability Awareness & Etiquette Workshop will be held on **Tues., Oct. 30** at 1:30 p.m. The location is 830 MoDOT Drive in the Blue Conference Room. People First of Boone County will be conducting this event.

Please RSVP to Linda Clevenger (Linda.Clevenger@modot.mo.gov or 526.5611) by Fri., Oct. 26.

Still Opportunities for Flu Vaccination

Flu vaccination clinics for active Central Office employees began this week. There are still opportunities for shots next week.

Location: 105 W. Capitol Ave., Conf. Room 100
Date: Tues., Oct 23
Time: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Location: 601 W. Main, Training Room B
Date: Wed., Oct 24
Time: 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

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Northwest District

Honoring a Fallen Hero

On Oct. 27, 2009, Sergeant Issac B. Jackson of the 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division of Fort Lewis, Wa., died while serving his country in Arghanadab Valley, Afghanistan. In honor of his service to his country, a portion of Route 116 in Clinton County, from Route A west to Route 33, was dedicated to the memory of this fallen soldier and hero on Oct. 1, 2012. The event was held at the Lathrop High School in Lathrop, Mo. You may either click on the image to the right or the link below to view the video of the event. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4eFVXpAR7k&feature=plcp>



Video shot and edited by Travis Ellis

MoDOT Auction



Photo by Matt Sonner

A little over \$300,000 was raised on Columbus Day, Oct. 8, 2012, when the Northwest District hosted an auction.

The auction company started at 9 a.m. and finished at 2:10 p.m., but it took three auction rings running simultaneously to keep things moving. There were 200 registered bidders and 16 online bidders in attendance. Credit for the success of the auction has to be shared district wide. It took the combined efforts of several departments and people to make it happen.

There have been several of these auctions held throughout the state, with a few more being planned. In case you were wondering, all money raised will go to the Northwest District State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The New Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge

The new Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge across the Missouri River in Buchanan County is nearing completion. A formal dedication/opening ceremony has tentatively been set for Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2012. No date has been set for the demolition of the 1939-era Amelia Earhart Bridge that still runs parallel to the new structure.



Photo by Eula Morrow

For more info

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Comments & Suggestions

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Work Zone Memorial Rededicated

Only a few weeks after Clifton Scott was killed in a work zone, families of loved ones who lost their lives the same way years before participated in a ceremony in Macon to rededicate the work zone memorial after it was moved from the former district office to the regional office.

Over half of the employees' families attended the ceremony, which was held on a beautiful day during an employee fall meeting. Director Kevin Keith was a guest speaker during the brief ceremony.

"I just think it's wonderful you all invited us to come...we're so glad we did," stated one family member who drove her mother from south Kansas City to attend.

"I lost my dad when I was just two, so I don't remember him, but my sister, who was five at the time, said she does," a tearful daughter told us. She and her husband drove from Gilman City to attend.

The work zone memorial can be seen from U.S. 63 just north of Macon at the MoDOT facility.



Director Kevin Keith shared his personal experiences of losing employees while they were in a work zone with the audience during the rededication ceremony.

Schools Take Battle Seriously

Competition might be fierce for rivals Monroe City and Palmyra on the football field this Friday night, yet another competition will be taking place in the stands. The NE Coalition for Roadway Safety and the NE Emergency Nurse's Association have brought their own team to the game to encourage a battle of the belt in the stands. Marie Frankenbach, a registered nurse for the emergency department of Hannibal Regional Hospital, and her team of nurses have worked with the cheerleaders, coaches and faculty of both schools to have a little "friendly" competition on both sides of the field since both schools are participating in the statewide Battle of the Belt program. "This is just one example of how some of the schools are fulfilling their commitment to get their students to wear seat belts," said NE Battle of the Belt Coordinator Tana Akright.



Harold Jones, Shelby maintenance, helps Taylor Vanskike and Emily Gaines from North Shelby High School paint the "buckle up" sign on their school's parking lot. A record number of schools, 35, from northeast Missouri are participating in the Battle of the Belt competition this year, which encourages teenagers to buckle up every time.

Schools have some creative ideas when it comes to sharing the seat belt message, and many of them have taken advantage of the opportunity to paint "buckle up" on their parking lots.

Around the District...



Bigger IS better! The NE District has gotten a lot of compliments on the new signs placed at the US 61/24 interchange north of Palmyra. The signs are huge and were installed in conjunction with a pavement project at the interchange this month.



Members of the New Cambria maintenance facility were recognized for their efforts by Maintenance Superintendent Dale Niece during the area's fall meeting.



Elsberry crew members took advantage of the beautiful weather to do a little "touching up" on Highway 79 in the bike only lanes.

For more info

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Comments & Suggestions

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Trooper Guthrie Honored During Interstate 29 Memorial Ceremony

by Jennifer Benefield

A memorial signing ceremony honoring Trooper Fred F. Guthrie, Jr. was held Oct. 5, 2012 at the Platte County Resource Center. The memorial highway is a portion of Interstate 29 between Missouri Highway 273 (near Tracy) and Missouri Route E (near Camden Point). Trooper Guthrie died in the line of duty August 1, 2011.

In attendance were Trooper Guthrie's family, Colonel Ronald Replogle, Superintendent of the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP), Captain Robert L. Powell, Commanding Officer of MSHP Troop A, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Northwest District Engineer Don Wichern, and Kansas City District Assistant to the District Engineer Randy Hartman.

The memorial highway honors Trooper Guthrie, who tragically lost his life after being swept away by swift moving flood waters. At the time, he was assigned to Missouri River flood duty and was working in the area of Big Lake on Missouri Highway 118 at Missouri Highway 111 in Holt County, Mo. Trooper Guthrie was the 30th member of the MSHP to lose his life in the line of duty. His K-9 partner, Reed, also died in the line of duty that day.

House Bill 1807/Senate Bill 480 sponsored by Missouri State Representative Nick Marshall, District 30, established the Trooper Fred F. Guthrie Jr. Memorial Highway. Marshall also attended and spoke at the ceremony.



A memorial signing ceremony honoring Trooper Fred F. Guthrie, Jr. was held October 5, 2012 in Platte County. The memorial highway is a portion of Interstate 29 between Missouri Highway 273 (near Tracy) and Missouri Route E (near Camden Point). Trooper Guthrie died in the line of duty August 1, 2011. Photo: Randy Hartman

Cole Honored as Advocate of the Year

by Gina Myles

MoDOT's Senior External Civil Rights Specialist Donnetta Cole, Kansas City District, was bestowed with the Advocate of the Year Award by the Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Planning Committee. The award was presented Oct. 11 at the MED Week Awards luncheon held at the Kansas City Downtown Marriott Hotel.

Cole was selected by her MED Week Planning Committee peers for her minority businesses development efforts. The award is designed for a minority or non-minority individual (and/or business entity) whose contributions to minority business growth and development were not performed solely for individual or business profit.

This year, the Kansas City Chapter of MED Week celebrated its 30-year anniversary. The business community came together Oct. 9 through 11 to recognize the contributions made by minority enterprises and honor accomplished minority business owners and advocates. Networking is a vital component to MED Week and provides educational opportunities to connect minority businesses and entrepreneurs with community leaders and one another.

The 2012 MED Week Celebration began Oct. 9 with a Kickoff at the Kauffman Conference Center with the Kansas City Small Business Networking Event. The agenda highlighted hands-on exposure and recognized the many economic contributions made by minority businesses.

On Wednesday, the Greater Kansas City Federal Executive Board (GKCFEB)/Small Business Committee annual meeting was followed by informational breakout sessions that identified the annual small business, sponsors of the monthly GSA networking event, and small business advocates. The GKCFEB is composed of city, county, state, and federal representatives, as well as representatives of small business organizations throughout the Greater Kansas City area.

Thursday's activities began with a "U.S. = WE GET READY, SET, GO" seminar featuring presentations from transportation industry representatives (railroad, highway, aviation, transit) who reviewed funding designated for future projects. This information helps attendees get a jump on upcoming Midwest regional opportunities. The seminar was

followed by the Referral Networking Forum, which provides the opportunity to increase businesses' strength through a structured, positive, and professional "word of mouth" setting.

MED Week culminated with the 30th Annual MED Week Awards Luncheon to celebrate the accomplishments of businesses that exhibit outstanding achievement in the following categories: retail, construction, professional service, manufacturing, supplier/distributor, service, new business, and minority business advocate.



Senior Civil Rights Specialist Donnetta Cole receives the Minority Enterprise Development Week Advocate of the Year Award from planning committee member Stan Peeples of Missouri Office Systems and Supplies. Photo: Gina Myles

For more info

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Ground Broken for Route 50 Expansion

U.S. Route 50 became one step closer to becoming a four-lane highway across Missouri on Oct. 15. That's when state and local officials broke ground on a 6.6-mile expansion of the east-west corridor in Osage County.

The new four-lane highway will run from the Route 50/63 junction to County Road 604 west of Linn. The new realignment will remove many of the hills, curves and access points drivers currently experience, greatly improving safety and traffic flow on Highway 50. As an added bonus, the construction should have minimal impact on the traveling public because the highway will be built on a new alignment.

Iron Mountain Construction Services of Maryland Heights, Mo., is the contractor on the \$25.5 million project, which is scheduled to be completed by September 2014. Also as part of a separate project that will be bid later, the current section of Route 50 from Route A to County Road 604 will be resurfaced and turned over to Osage County.



Oct. 15 was a day for state and local officials to celebrate the ground breaking of a project that will expand U.S. Route 50 in Osage County. Pictured from left are Osage County Second District Commissioner Vincent Samson, Sen. Mike Kehoe, Osage County First District Commissioner Elmer Senevey, Osage County Presiding Commissioner Dave Dudenhoeffer, Central District Engineer Dave Silvester and Linn Mayor Dwight Massey. Additional photos from the ceremony can be found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/modot/sets/72157631784740789/>.

"Four-laning this section of Route 50 will not only benefit mid-Missourians, but also cross-state travelers," said Chief Engineer Dave Nichols. "We would love to be able to make Route 50 a four-lane highway across the entire state, but even after this project is completed, we still have 91 miles to go."

Nichols noted there is no funding available for any additional expansion of Route 50, though MoDOT's five-year construction program does contain money for preliminary design of new highway lanes around Linn.

"Moving forward, we only have enough funding to try to keep our roads and bridges in as good of condition as we can for as long as we can," Nichols said. "That's unfortunate, because projects like this enhance the state's transportation system and make travel safer, ease congestion, create jobs and foster economic development."



A local resident views the plans for the new Route 50 expansion.



The Children's Choir from St. George Catholic School in Linn - under the direction of Sr. Celle - opened the groundbreaking ceremony by singing the National Anthem.

Act of Service Saves Life

Arlis Humphrey Receives Meritorious Service Award

When St. Robert Maintenance Crew Leader Arlis Humphrey was driving on Business Route 44 in Waynesville on Aug. 23, 2012, he probably never thought he would save a man's life, thus earning him the Meritorious Safety Award. But that's exactly what happened.

Just after 1 a.m. on Aug. 23, Arlis encountered an intoxicated and unresponsive gentleman laying in the middle of Business Route 44 in Waynesville. The man narrowly escaped being struck by Arlis' vehicle. Arlis pulled over and witnessed another passing vehicle swerve to miss the man. The occupants of the other vehicle stopped and told Arlis there was a person lying in the road. Arlis instructed them to call 911.

Arlis then turned his vehicle around and stopped in front of the man to protect him from oncoming traffic. Most of the man's body was in the driving lane of the highway. Arlis made contact with the man, who was initially unresponsive, but began talking within a few minutes. The man indicated he had too much to drink. He didn't know where he was and was unable to tell Arlis his name or where he lived.

Arlis helped the man to his feet and, fearing for his safety, placed the man in his vehicle and transported him to the St. Robert maintenance facility. Shortly thereafter, Arlis made contact with local police, who assured Arlis they would get the man home safely.

Said Arlis: "I am thankful that I saw him before anyone else, because I honestly believe he would have been run over if I hadn't been traveling there at that point in time."

Central District Engineer Dave Silvester and Assistant Central District Engineer Travis Koestner presented the award to Arlis at his fall meeting in Rolla on Oct. 10. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission will also honor Arlis at the January commission meeting.



St. Robert Maintenance Crew Leader Arlis Humphreys, center, receives the Meritorious Safety Award from Assistant Central District Engineer Travis Koestner, left, and Central District Engineer Dave Silvester, right.

Safe & Sound Program Comes to An End

Drivers in central Missouri are now traveling over 88 improved bridges thanks to the Missouri Department of Transportation's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program. When state and local officials met on Oct. 4 cut the ribbon to officially open the Route W bridge over Second Creek in Gasconade County, it marked the end of the program in central Missouri.



State and local officials gathered Oct. 4 to cut the ribbon to officially open the Route W bridge over Second Creek in Gasconade County. The completion of the bridge marked the end of MoDOT's Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program in central Missouri. Pictured from left to right cutting the ribbon are Sen. Mike Kehoe, Dale Ridder, incoming Gasconade County Northern District Commissioner Larry Miskel, Gasconade County Southern District Commissioner Jerry Lairmore and MoDOT Central District Engineer David Silvester.

Billed as the largest bridge improvement effort in Missouri history, the Safe & Sound program began in February 2009 with the goal of improving 802 of Missouri's worst bridges in five years. Statewide, the program is on track to be completed this month – two years ahead of schedule. Each county in Missouri had at least one bridge scheduled for improvement under Safe & Sound.

One of the program's unique features is that most of the bridges were closed to speed construction and reduce cost. The average closure statewide has been 42 days, with many bridges completed early. Overall, a bridge has been repaired or replaced every 1.5 days.

"We are proud to deliver these important bridge improvements in the central Missouri area," said Central District Engineer Dave Silvester. "We owe a great deal of thanks to mid-Missourians for their patience while this work took place. For some, it meant a daily detour for several months, and we know how inconvenient that can be. But as a result, we have 88

safer bridges in our area, and that's a great thing."

Silvester said MoDOT and its contractors worked hard to coordinate with local communities, schools and emergency responders to minimize the impact of the work. For the most part, local communities were supportive of the program.

The Safe & Sound program shows the speed, quality and flexibility that can be obtained when funding is available, Silvester said. He noted there are no projects of this scope on the horizon in Missouri due to a severe decline in funding for transportation.

"Moving forward, we do not have the money to tackle the kind of larger transportation projects that increase safety, reduce congestion, put people to work and support economic development," Silvester said.

CD Staff Honored for Years of Service

Thirty-six Central District employees were honored for 20 years or more of service to MoDOT at the annual Service Awards Banquet held Oct. 5 at Willmore Lodge at the Lake of the Ozarks.

J. David Logan was recognized for 40 years of service. Others receiving service awards were:

- 20 Curtis C Allinson
- 20 Darryl Wayne Wilson
- 20 David Layne Taylor
- 20 David P Ordway
- 20 David Todd Silvester
- 20 Douglas L Even
- 20 Forrest L Long
- 20 Gerald Bruce Poulin
- 20 Janis Marie Gieck
- 20 Jeffrey A Verslues
- 20 Joseph B Schulte
- 20 Karyn M Veltrop
- 20 Leroy H Wieberg
- 20 Mary M Rackers
- 20 Michael George Smith
- 20 Norma J Snelling
- 20 Peggy J Higgins
- 20 Randy Joseph Rice
- 20 Steve David Owens
- 20 William Roger Abbott
- 25 Allen Charles Thoenen
- 25 Connie J Roadruck
- 25 Dennis D Noblett
- 25 Jerry A Martin
- 25 Karl D Davenport
- 25 Kenneth R Holtgrewe
- 25 Mary Kathryn Otting
- 25 Philip J Lecure
- 25 Ronald Terry Laney
- 25 Terry R Imhoff
- 25 Tudor Rafa
- 25 William Michael Wade
- 30 Douglas R Thomas



California Senior Maintenance Worker J. David Logan, center, was recently honored for 40 years of service to MoDOT. Pictured with him are State Maintenance Engineer Beth Wright and Central District Engineer Dave Silvester.

30 Kenneth D Strube
30 Steven A Pendleton
30 Tony E Nichols

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Comments & Suggestions

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St. Louis Maintenance Worker Receives Employee Spotlight Recognition

by Jack Wang

Many MoDOT employees can recall just how hot the summer of 2012 was. Triple-digit temperature days were often the norm in St. Louis. Then, imagine training new maintenance employees outside all day in the extreme heat.

Wentzville Senior Crew Worker Janet Rath endured the humid conditions to train maintenance employees for their commercial drivers' licenses (CDL) test.

"I was training them on how to get their Class A with the trailer and the truck, teaching them everything there is to know so when they take their test, they're able to pass it," said Rath.

Fellow maintenance employee, Jim Feeney, noticed the hard work Rath was putting in, and nominated her for the Voice of St. Louis Employee Spotlight.

"She was training employees to achieve Class A driver's licenses on a couple of occasions in July while the temperature was in the high 90's to 105 degrees," said Feeney. "All the employees passed their tests which showed the skill and patience Janet possessed."

"It was very hot," admitted Rath. "We took several breaks during the hottest part of the day and some days were just easier than others."

Rath was surprised and honored to learn of her nomination by a fellow employee.

"It makes me feel good and I love doing what I was doing, teaching them everything that I know, it's awesome, said Rath. "I wasn't expecting it; I was just doing my job. I'm glad they did very well."



Last Chance to Vote for I-270 Dorsett-Page National Transportation Award

by Kara Price

There are only a few more days left to vote for St. Louis' one and only diverging diamond interchange for a national transportation award (Oct. 19 is the last day to vote). This I-270 at Dorsett-Page project has been selected as one of the 10 national finalists in the 2012 America's Transportation Awards competition.

As one of the Top 10, this project is now in the running for two prizes: the Grand Prize and the People's Choice Awards. Both winners will receive national recognition and a \$10,000 cash prize, which can be donated to the charity or scholarship fund of their choosing.

The MoDOT team encourages employees and retirees to vote now through AASHTO's online awards link. You can vote up to 10 times per day by [clicking here](#) or visit www.AmericasTransportationAward.org. The winners will be announced at the AASHTO annual meeting held on Nov. 18.



Construction for I-70 Blanchette Bridge Kicks Off in November

by Linda Wilson Horn

St. Louis motorists are preparing for a major bridge rehabilitation project as they are planning for alternate routes to travel between St. Louis and St. Charles Counties. The Interstate 70 Blanchette Missouri River bridge construction project will have a significant impact on traffic starting in early November, weather permitting. The \$63 million rehabilitation will close the westbound bridge detouring all traffic onto the eastbound bridge until fall 2013.



The I-70 Blanchette Bridge over the Missouri River is a significant connection between St. Louis and St. Charles Counties.

Several construction activities will occur over the next three weeks:

- Friday, Oct. 19 – half of the lanes the eastbound I-70 bridge close in the evening.
- Sunday, Oct. 21 – lanes reopen on eastbound bridge overnight.
- Friday, Oct. 26 – half of the lanes on westbound I-70 at Earth City and ramps at Earth City closed in the evening.
- Sunday, Oct. 28 – lanes reopen on westbound I-70 and at the Earth City ramps overnight.
- Friday, Nov. 2 – half of the lanes on both directions close in the evening.
- Sunday, Nov. 4 – all traffic is rerouted to eastbound bridge by this evening and the westbound bridge is closed.
- Monday, Nov. 5 – first Monday morning rush hour with reduced I-70 lanes and slow speed limit.
- Mid-Nov/Early Dec - three full closures of I-70 for bridge blasts. Both directions of I-70 closed for up to one hour.
- Fall 2013 – westbound Blanchette Bridge reopens. Traffic patterns return to normal.

For more information on the I-70 Blanchette Bridge rehabilitation, please [click here](http://www.modot.org/stlouis/major_projects/BlanchetteBridgeRenovations.htm) or visit www.modot.org/stlouis/major_projects/BlanchetteBridgeRenovations.htm

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Route T at Lake Wappapello Opens

During the spring 2011 flood, Route T near Lake Wappapello in Wayne County washed out due to rising lake levels and use of the emergency spillway. A temporary crossing was put in place, but MoDOT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wanted to find a more permanent solution. The newly opened Route T at Lake Wappapello is the result of their efforts.

Route T reopened on Monday, Oct. 8. The new roadway has a curved alignment similar to that of the temporary crossing, with improved accommodations for oversized vehicles.

In the coming weeks, guardrail, lighting and sign work will be completed in the area. This work could cause periodic lane closures on Route T. Motorists are encouraged to use caution when traveling near the area.

A \$1,513,845 contract for the project was awarded to H.R. Quadri Contractors, LLC, Van Buren, Mo., in June 2012.



Route T at Lake Wappapello reopened on Monday, Oct. 8.

Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge Goes Pink

Saint Francis Thanks MoDOT for Help During BCAM



To kick-off Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM), Saint Francis Medical Center contacted MoDOT to join in the fight by allowing them to light the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge in Cape Girardeau, Mo., pink.

Ms. Felecia R. Blanton, director of marketing and referral services for Saint Francis, sent the following thank you note to MoDOT:

Thank you for helping us light the Bill Emerson bridge pink in honor of breast cancer awareness month. It is beautiful and really a conversation starter. Hopefully, it will inspire women to get mammograms.

Congrats 2012 Service Award Recipients!

Five-Year Service Awards

Front (l to r): Shawndra Burkhart, Seth Bollinger, Lonnie Chambers, Mark Nichols, Shaun Hendrix, Harold Eads, Michael Mahurin, Troy Cagle, Charles McFadden, Leroy Devonshire.

Back (l to r): Sheree Faenger, Paul Mathis, Tracie Sanders, James Triplett, David Hollmann, Andy Mattingly, Lonnie Thompson, Johnny White, Douglas Geohagan, Jason Winkle, Adam Contreras, Ann Wink, Julia Morgan.

10-Year Service Awards

Front (l to r): Mark Baumann, Allen Hull, Jamie Schaffer, Jason Harris, Thomas Osburn, Michael Chasteen, Elvin Terrill.

Back (l to r): Ronnie Sawyers, Maurice Farr, Terry Nailling, Craig Atkins, Cory Gray, Craig Duncan, Mary Shrubbs, Sara Johnson, Angela Temple.

15-Year Service Awards

Front (l to r): Travis Stanback, Clay Wood, Ronald Reynolds, Don Ricker, Lee Bright, Darius Dowdy, Danny Bedwell, James Barnes, Tommy Burgess.

Back (l to r): Lloyd Crewse, Brian Tune, Randy Sanders, Douglas Glaser, Thomas Sullivan, Greg Buckner, Dallas McRoy, Steve Rightnowar, Denise Hopper, Donald Essner, Sue Sifford, Daniel Lacy, Marsha Lovan, Martin Elliott, Lisa Cook, Darrell Emery, Michael Harris, Joseph Allgier, Michael Moon.

To view more service award photos, please visit: www.flickr.com/photos/43000037@N05/sets/72157631752113127/.



Five-Year Service Award Recipients



10-Year Service Award Recipients



15-Year Service Award Recipients

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PERMITTING NIGHTTIME LANE CLOSINGS: Senior Traffic Specialist Mark Stiles, right, and Empire District Electric's Rob McGovern determine lane closings and traffic control needed on Route 14 between Nixa and Ozark for a vegetation control project underneath Empire's power lines. The nighttime work required a debris grinder to be set up on the road. (Photo: Bob Edwards)



FALL MOWING: Lamar Intermediate Maintenance Worker Jim Lawrence is part of a Lamar Maintenance crew mowing along U.S. 71. He works along a ramp at Jasper County Routes H/K at Jasper. (Photo: Bob Edwards)

US 65 4-Lane Project Dedicated at Warsaw

by Bob Edwards



Celebrating the recently completed four-laning of U.S. 65 through central Benton County are, from left, Southwest District Engineer Becky Baltz, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman Rudy Farber, Warsaw City Administrator Randy Pogue, Warsaw Mayor Eddie Simons, Lincoln Mayor John King and MoDOT Assistant Chief Engineer Don Hillis. (Photo: Bob Edwards)

District Engineer Becky Baltz was just getting started with her remarks at a ribbon-cutting to celebrate the widening of U.S. 65 to four lanes in Benton County when the crowd burst into applause.

The spontaneous response was very much welcome.

The two-part, \$32.7-million project, on area leaders' wish list for many years, had taken several years to plan and fund. Then it took three years to build. Work was completed in late Sept., a few months late because of delays during construction.

Despite the challenges, the project turned out great. Assistant Chief Engineer Don Hillis told 60 people attending the dedication. The event was held at Faith Lutheran Church overlooking the highway on Warsaw's south side.

The reason for success was teamwork, Hillis said. The team, he said, included MoDOT staff, contractors and, most of all, the citizens of Benton County who fought for the project and then had to live with inconvenience during

construction.

"Nice job. It's a beautiful road," he said.

Hillis thanked area residents for helping provide the resources by supporting Amendment 3 at the polls in 2004. He also expressed thanks to residents who drove through the work zone every day for the courtesy they extended to one another and to workers on the project.

Warsaw City Administrator Randy Pogue said Benton County should celebrate the project. The four-lane highway will make travel easier and safer and will be attractive to new businesses, he said.

The project covers from near Route 52 north of Lincoln through Warsaw, a 13-mile long segment that includes nearly two miles of five-lane road in Lincoln. He praised MoDOT for tight planning and budgeting processes that made it possible to free up enough money to fund the project.

Looking ahead, Pogue said it is critical to the region to four-lane U.S. 65 between Warsaw and Buffalo -- through southern Benton County, Hickory County and northern Dallas County. That 45-mile long stretch is the only remaining two-lane portion of U.S. 65 south of Interstate 70. Pogue is chairman of the U.S. 65 Corridor Coalition, a group of community leaders from the 13 counties through which the highway passes between Iowa and Arkansas.

Missouri Highways and Transportation Chairman Rudy Farber of Neosho said the commission would like to tackle the Warsaw-to-Buffalo project, but funds are not available because of MoDOT's declining revenues.

Farber asked those present to work with the commission and business and community leaders across Missouri to figure out how to increase funding for more highway projects like U.S. 65 in Benton County that generate economic development and jobs.

Other speakers were Warsaw Mayor Eddie Simons and Lincoln Mayor John King. They said the four-laning project already has brought the two communities closer together and can provide more opportunities for growth and development.

The Benton County project was begun before MoDOT's 2011 reorganization under the Bolder Five-Year Direction. From the Central District, Project Manager Nicole Hood led the way, designers were Randy Potts, James Beattie and Jeannie Hoff and Resident Engineer was John Sanders.

The final year of construction was overseen by Clinton Resident Engineer Brett Foster of the Southwest District. Staying with the project to the end was Marshall Senior Construction Inspector Eric Mothersbaugh, who worked out of the former Sedalia construction office with now-retired Senior Construction Inspector Gary Balke.

3-1/2-Year Journey: 60/65 Wraps Up Friday

by Angela Eden

On the 1,257th day of construction Friday, the rebuilding of the U.S. 60/65 interchange in southeast Springfield will be complete.

The project changed the landscape -- and made travel easier and safer -- at the busiest highway intersection in the state outside of the St. Louis and Kansas City metro areas.

Here's how:

- Eight new bridges were built, including two directional "flyover" ramps.
- The flyovers -- for eastbound-to-northbound and northbound-to-westbound traffic -- meant two cloverleaf ramps could be replaced. That eliminated a tight merging area on the northbound U.S. 65 bridge over U.S. 60 where many accidents had occurred over the years.
- Four of the new bridges were built on U.S. 60 spanning the railroad tracks serving City Utilities' James River Power Plant. Those bridges eliminated at-grade crossings where U.S. 60 traffic often had to stop for slow-moving coal trains.
- Four other bridges were replaced or rebuilt. That included building a new northbound U.S. 65 bridge to replace an old structure that required frequent deck repairs.

The project's total cost hit \$65 million, which includes \$57.1 million for construction.

The entire project was built under traffic. An estimated 100-million vehicles traveled through the interchange during the 3-1/2-years of work.

To help keep people informed about construction delays, including lane, road and ramp closings, weekly updates and frequent traffic alerts were sent to the news media and to an 800-member email group that was developed for direct communication with area residents who signed up.

The email outreach effort, a tool the district Community Relations staff has used on many projects over the past dozen years, often generated positive responses on the 60/65 project.

"This seems like a good time to thank you for the updates," one update recipient wrote back recently. "They have been immeasurably valuable when deciding how to get where I am going. Looking forward to it all being done!"

Another member of the email group responded: "Hi there, and thanks again for all of the information you continue to send."

A community celebration to herald the completion of the 60/65 project is set for 10 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 1, on the U.S. 65 east outer road south of the Gasconade Street overpass.



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